

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been currently amended, claims 2 and 3 remain as originally filed, claim 4 is cancelled and claim 5 is as originally filed. Accordingly, only claims 1, 2, 3 and 5 remain for the Examiner's further consideration.

Claim 1 is characterized in that "when the articles have been cut out from each auxiliary conveyance path for joining, a spacing is created on said auxiliary conveyance path prior to next carrying in of articles". The Examiner rejected claim 1 as being anticipated by Lazzarotti or Gretener et al. with the statement that "Note that, when an article is moved from the feed path, a spacing is created or enlarged in front of the next upstream article in that feed path." However, Applicant cannot find anything to support that statement in either of the two references, Lazzarotti and Gretener. Accordingly, it is believed that the above quoted characterizing portion of claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the references cited.

Claim 1 has been amended in the characterizing portion to add "to prevent the articles from being successively cut out from only one auxiliary conveyance path to the main conveyance path." This additional language is explanatory and is not believed to raise any new issues or require further consideration and/or search. The claim as now presented sets forth a method which obviates the disadvantage of articles being successively cut out only from a single auxiliary conveyance path to the main conveyance path while other articles on other auxiliary conveyance paths cannot be cut out to the main conveyance path. It is believed that the method as thus defined clearly and patentably distinguishes from the references of record.

Neither Lazzarotti nor Gretener et al. teaches the characteristic feature of the invention according to which after articles are cut out for joining, a spacing is created on each auxiliary conveyance path before succeeding articles are fed thereon. Neither of these references discloses a method wherein it is possible to prevent articles from being successively cut out from one auxiliary conveyance path alone to the main conveyance path, so that articles on other auxiliary conveyance paths can be cut out to the main conveyance path.

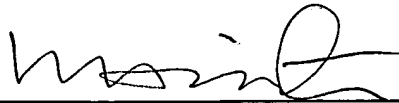
Thus, it is believed that claim 1 should be allowable.

Claims 2, 3 and 5 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and should be allowable along with claim 1. These claims define further distinguishing features as pointed out in the last previous amendment.

In view of the foregoing, this application is believed now to be in condition for allowance and such action is most respectfully requested. However, if the Examiner should note any problems with the claims in their present condition which can be corrected by Examiner's Amendment or otherwise, the undersigned attorney would appreciate a telephone call from the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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